

# Texas A&M University

Driving efficiency with unified parking solutions



## Name

Texas A&M University

## Industries

Higher Education

## Location

College Station, Texas, United States

## Products

AutoVu, Omnicast



## Texas A&M modernizes campus parking with Genetec AutoVu ALPR and Omnicast

### A vibrant university in the heart of Texas

Texas A&M University opened its doors in 1876 as the state's first public institution of higher learning. Today, it's well known as a research-intensive flagship university dedicated to preparing Aggie leaders to take on the challenges of tomorrow.

Located in the heart of the Houston-Dallas-Austin triangle, Texas A&M's main campus in College Station, Texas, is home to more than 69,000 students. Another 5,200 are at branch campuses. To accommodate parking and transportation for this busy campus, the university's Transportation Services division manages over 36,000 parking spaces, including 11,000 in structures such as parking garages, and logs over six million rides per year on campus buses.

### Growing campus leads to parking challenges

The growing student and staff population at Texas A&M University led to more cars, bicycles, foot traffic, and bus passengers to manage. Manual processes couldn't keep up. Issuing and managing physical permits required significant administrative work, and the parking enforcement team relied on foot patrols to walk each parking lot. Staff would write tickets when they saw cars without valid parking receipts or hang tags. It was a slow and cumbersome process, making it difficult to monitor parking lot occupancy to ensure the number of permit holders matches the number of available spots.

"When we sell a parking permit for a specific facility, we guarantee that you'll find a space when you show up," noted Parking Systems Manager, Dell Hamilton. "Ensuring our lots are managed effectively is important. Everyone needs to easily find a parking spot."

### Genetec ALPR implemented to streamline parking enforcement

To take on the challenges with parking, the Transportation Services team at Texas A&M needed a scalable, automated solution for parking enforcement. Because the department had great success with Genetec Omnicast™ for video surveillance, Hamilton turned to Genetec AutoVu™ automatic license plate recognition (ALPR).

With integration help from Houston-based Preferred Technologies, Texas A&M University deployed fixed and mobile ALPR solutions across campus, including cameras on enforcement vehicles and at selected parking facility entrances and exits.

Now, parking enforcement is based on license plate registrations, and the university eliminated physical permits for the majority of customers. Patrollers use vehicles equipped with AutoVu SharpZ3 cameras to enforce parking and track real-time data on parking lot usage — even during large events. If the AutoVu camera reads a license plate that's not on the registered vehicle

list, the operator is immediately notified and can then determine the appropriate enforcement actions based on the circumstances.

“The reduction in time and resources required to enforce parking is notable. A patrol that used to take an hour now takes around 10 minutes,” Hamilton said. “We’re able to reallocate resources in a more efficient way, such as sending patrols more frequently to high violation areas.”

Getting data on parking violations more quickly also makes it easier to manage the variety of parking restrictions that exist on campus. This includes spaces reserved for specific groups of people, time of day restrictions, and timed parking limits in areas such as the student recreation center.



### Beyond enforcement: Genetec ALPR improves operations

While Hamilton’s team initially expected to use ALPR mainly for parking enforcement, they quickly realized the new system could have a much bigger impact. Because AutoVu integrates with Texas A&M’s payment, ticketing, and permit validation partners, the university was not only able to speed up enforcement but also greatly improve operational efficiency and customer experience.

The transition to virtual permits for most customers eliminated the need to print out a paper receipt to put on their dash before their hang tag arrived in the mail. Now, vehicle information is in the system almost immediately after the customer purchases the permit. Even conference or event permits can be issued more efficiently. The department or group hosting an event buys the permits, enters the plate information, and the customers’ vehicles are registered.

“Going away from paper permits and hang tags was a huge success,” Hamilton said. “Today, the vast majority of permits issued can be validated with ALPR. Students, faculty, staff, and guests don’t have to deal with a hang tag or paper permit. Users can go online and change the plate on their account, and it’s in the system within minutes. We’ve also seen a reduction in overhead costs since we don’t print and distribute hang tags. We not only save on printing and shipping costs but also make it easier for the customer to exchange or return their permit.”

### Next steps in parking and transit improvements

Implementing Genetec AutoVu and Omnicast has made parking enforcement more efficient and effective. Now, the Transportation Services team is eyeing more ways to leverage their technology investment. Transportation Services is working with T2 Systems, a Genetec partner, to implement ALPR-based access control in one of the campus garages. Other garages may follow. Transportation Services has also outfitted more than 60 of their transit buses with Security Center Fleet Monitoring. The remaining 30+ buses are scheduled to be completed this year.

“We’d like to continue expanding our use of Genetec ALPR. Whenever Genetec introduces a solution, it works,” said Hamilton. “Our team has been able to significantly improve our parking and transit operations using Genetec. I can’t imagine working with anyone else.”

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